

“God’s Choice for Choosing Leaders”

Message by DD Adams
Kemptown Providence UMC
4th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
Father’s Day
June 17, 2018

The O.T. reading is from 1 Samuel 16:1b and verses 6-13. Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king. When they arrived, Samuel looked at Eliab and thought, that must be the Lord’s anointed right in front.

But the Lord said to Samuel, “Have no regard for his appearance or stature, because I haven’t selected him. God doesn’t look at things like humans do. Humans see only what is visible to the eyes, but the Lord sees into the heart.” Next Jesse called for Abinadab, who presented himself to Samuel, but he said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.”

So Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “No, the Lord hasn’t chosen this one.” Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t picked any of these.” Then Samuel asked Jesse, “Is that all of your boys?” “There is still the youngest one,” Jesse answered, “but he’s out keeping the sheep.”

“Send for him,” Samuel told Jesse, “because we can’t proceed until he gets here.” So Jesse sent and brought him in. He was reddish brown, had beautiful eyes,

and was good-looking. The Lord said, “That’s the one. Go anoint him.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him right there in front of his brothers. The Lord’s spirit came over David from that point forward.

The gospel lesson is Mark 4:30-32. Jesus said, “What’s a good image for God’s kingdom? What parable can I use to explain it? Consider a mustard seed. When scattered on the ground, it’s the smallest of all the seeds on the earth; but when it’s planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all vegetable plants. It produces such large branches that the birds in the sky are able to nest in its shade.” This is God’s word for God’s people.

God we pray your blessing on the hearing, reading, and understanding of your word today. Peace be with you!

In 1 Samuel 16, we see Samuel the prophet planning a trip to Bethlehem to anoint the next king. When Samuel arrives, Jesse the father brings the sons before the prophet, and God tells Samuel, these aren’t the ones. Both Samuel and Jesse are bit surprised. They’re all first-rate men! The Lord tells Samuel this. Don’t look on their appearance or on the height of their stature. The Lord doesn’t see as mortals see: they look on the outward appearance; the Lord looks on the heart (v. 7).

There’s one more son Jesse said. He’s the youngest and his name is David. He’s tending a flock of sheep. When Samuel saw David, the Lord told him, “Rise and anoint him; for this is the one.” No doubt, God surprises Jesse’s family

because shepherds weren't respected in that day, and on top of that, David was the youngest. Truth be told, throughout David's leadership as king he has troubles, he gets distracted, and he messes up. We might wonder, "What is God doing?" Yet God uses him as he uses us when we seek God's heart. David didn't have any training and looking at him the world wonders; "What is God doing?" Still, David was used by God despite the mishaps he brought on himself.

In Mark 4:30-32 we read another similar concept. God uses the smallest of all seeds, he has a farmer scatter it, and then causes the small seed to grow into the largest of all vegetable plants. It grows huge branches and birds nest in its shade. God chooses the most unlikely seed, so very small, and then causes other creatures he's created to find shade and make a home in it where they feel safe. Our earthly fathers are similar to both King David and the mustard seed bush.

The O.T. and gospel reading tell us that God has a different way of looking at things. God sees within a person's heart. What she or he can become and their desire to become as God would want. God sees a boyish small appearance and grows David into a great king, and the world sees a stinky shepherd who's young and without maturity. God chooses what the world disregards.

And the mustard seed—the very smallest of seeds—grows into the largest of all vegetable plants and provides much of what others need. But the world stands by and snickers, but God brings to fruition his divine master plan. We may wonder

why God reverses the order of what we expect . . . it all comes down to who gets the glory. It's God alone who gets the honor and glory. The apostle Paul says it like this in 1 Corinthians 1:27-29. "But God chose what the world considers foolish to shame the wise. God chose what the world considers weak to shame the strong. And God nothing—to reduce what is considered to be something to nothing. *So no human being can brag in God's presence.*"

Let's celebrate our earthly fathers today. They do their very best. Most know their limitations and short-comings, and in response, they know they must look up and give God glory because that's to whom all glory rightfully belongs. No matter what anyone says, earthly fathers who look to their Maker shine like a bright star in a world veiled in darkness. Honor your dad today and tell him you love him.

Please pray with me. God we pray for all fathers, grandfathers, and great grandfathers here today. Bless each from your glorious riches, strengthen each with power through God's Spirit in his inner being so that Christ may dwell in their heart through faith. May each be rooted and established in love, have power, and together with all God's people, grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ. And that each might know this love that surpasses knowledge and be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. And may God do for your family immeasurably more than you could ever ask or think or imagine. Amen.

1. What's the size of a mustard seed? 1 -2 millimeters; the smallest of all the seeds on the earth.
2. Mustard bushes reach an average mature **height of** reach 30 feet tall under ideal conditions with a wide expanse.
3. They have a spreading **drooping or weeping branch structure.**

